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Emir of Kuwait will restore parliamentary democracy and ordered polls next year. Page 5

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Deep in the Forest where the Medicines Grow

A fascinating account of discovery tells: One of the great fears about deforestation is that all manner of plant and tree life that can be used medicinally to treat illnesses may be lost to humankind.

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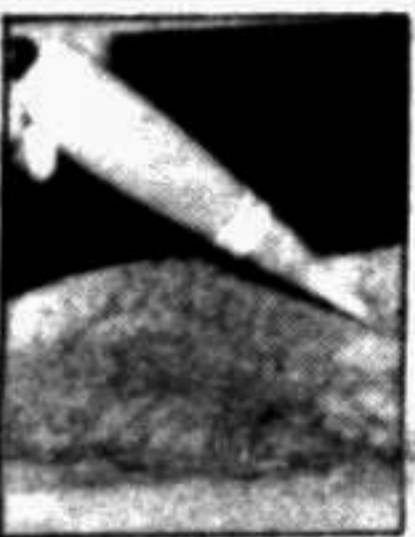
Sport

Mohammedans win Independence Day soccer championship.

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Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



With time the application of 'Henna' or 'Mehendi' has undergone a change. Innovations have taken the place of tradition.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Japan's ruling party chief quits

TOKYO, Apr 8: The forceful head of Japan's ruling party resigned today to take the blame for his party's bitter election defeat at the hands of the incumbent Tokyo governor whom he had tried to remove. reports Reuters.

Shahabuddin hosts Iftar party

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Monday evening hosted an Iftar Party at Bangabhaban. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and senior members of the Cabinet attended the Iftar party. reports BSS.

Factories, houses gutted in city

Several small factories and semi pucca residential houses were gutted Monday by a fire at Kazi Braoudin Road in Lalbagh in Dhaka. Fire Brigade sources said. reports BSS.

\$526 m Pak payments deficit

KARACHI, Apr 8: Pakistan faces a \$526 million dollar deficit in its balance of payments in the current fiscal year up from the 271 million dollars estimated in the budget. Finance Ministry officials said today. reports AFP.

Sahri and Iftar timings

Month	Day	Last time	Iftar
23	Tuesday	4.22 am	6.23 pm
24	Wednesday	4.21 am	6.23 pm

Conspiracy was hatched to transfer power in a different way on December 5: M. K. Anwar

Pandemonium over reference to '86 JS

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) on Monday witnessed a noisy scene over references by the members to the 1986 parliament. Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali was in the chair.

Minister for Shipping M. K. Anwar, who was the Cabinet Secretary under the Ershad government was at the receiving end of attack by the Awami League members. "Those who were the henchmen of the fallen autocratic government have been given shelter by BNP

and made ministers," said Mohammad Nasim, Chief Whip of the Opposition.

Civil servant turned politician M. K. Anwar made his parliamentary debut and offered a strong rebuff to the Opposition.

He told the House that as Cabinet Secretary, he took strong initiatives on December 5 last year to resist the conspiracy that was hatched to transfer power in a different way. "Had it not been done, autocracy would have lasted,

for two more years," he said. The minister said, the Leader of the Opposition and other members also know what was going on before transfer of power by former President Ershad. "They also know what role I played," he added.

He strongly refuted the Opposition charges against him of being "a henchman of Ershad". "The notes that I wrote on the official files will bear testimony to my role as a

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Treasury Bench unenthusiastic about debate

AL strategy to harp on form of govt

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League and its allies have taken it as a strategy to hammer on the issue of the form of government and the power of the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament).

On the other hand, the Treasury Bench members appear unenthusiastic about a debate on this issue.

Members of both the Treasury and the Opposition Benches however set the tone of debate on the form of government from last Sunday.

Leader of the House Begum Zia in her felicitation to the newly elected Speaker clearly mentioned that as a legislative body the Parliament would remain sovereign for making law.

But she did not mention anything about the form of government, whether they would retain the existing pres-

idential form or go for a parliamentary system as demanded by the Awami League and its allies.

Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina, on her party has clearly stressed the need for a sovereign parliament for what she said, "to place democracy on a firm footing.

But many of the members from both the Treasury and the Opposition Benches told the Daily Star that by the way the debate in the Parliament was proceeding it would not yield any benefit.

They said that the leaders of both the Treasury and the Opposition Benches should sit together outside Parliament and try to reach a consensus on the issue. They also said that the matter was a very delicate one.

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Reazuddin Ahmed

The Treasury Bench members seemed to have overcome their inertia and awakened to the proceedings of the House on Monday.

A good number of members from both sides made the day's proceedings lively.

There was a very brief encounter between the Leader of the House Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina over the landing of an Indian helicopter at Sarail in Brahmanbaria.

Sheikh Hasina retorted to Khaleda Zia's statement that she was not fully aware of the incident as she got the Home Ministry only two days ago.

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Dispute over status resolved amicably

By Staff Correspondent

The dispute between the Treasury Bench and the Opposition on the status of opposition leader in the business advisory committee of the parliament was resolved amicably Monday. All Opposition members along with three independents returned to House and participated in yesterday's session.

Monday's session began at 11:15 a.m. with Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair. But the MPs belonging to opposition

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Landing of Indian copter

PM's statement provokes debate in house

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad (parliament) on Monday witnessed a lively debate on the form of government and the power of the Prime Minister and Leader of the House.

The debate began centering a statement by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia that she did not have information about the landing of an Indian helicopter in Bangladesh territory and its safe return, since she took charge of the Home Ministry only two days ago. Deputy Speaker Sheikh

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia giving away the Independence Cup soccer trophy to Mohammedan Sporting skipper Kaiser Hamid after Monday's final at the Dhaka Stadium. Mohammedans beat Abahani 4-2 in the tie-break. Story on Page 7.

—Star photo



Armed contingents of BDR, police and jail guards waiting at the Dhaka Central Jail gate for a 'green signal' to begin operation as prisoners revolted on Monday. 6000-watt lights mounted on two trucks of the Fire Service were used for the night crackdown.

—Star Photo

10 prisoners escape: 40 injured in clash

Revolt in Dhaka Jail

By Staff Correspondent

At least 10 prisoners escaped from Dhaka Central Jail after a revolt on Monday afternoon. Two of them were recaptured later.

The prisoners threw cocktails and fired revolvers at the jail guards to make their way. Some of their 'agents' waiting outside the jail also threw cocktails, jail sources and eyewitnesses said.

The jail authorities however could not confirm the number of prisoners who fled the jail.

At least 40 people including 10 wardens were injured in the clash between the rebellious prisoners and the law enforcement agency personnel, sources said.

Five of the injured prisoners were admitted to the PG Hospital and three injured wardens were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The other injured persons were be-

ing treated in the jail hospital.

Eyewitness said, the prisoners started agitation at around 3-30 pm and attacked jail guards with cocktails and stones thrown at them.

They climbed the pipes of the jail buildings and crossed the high wall with the help of their 'agents' waiting outside.

As the jail authorities rang the alarm, BDR, police personnel and jail guards rushed to the jail gate and took position. But they went into action inside the jail after 11am with the help of two units of the Fire Service with moveable floodlights and 6000 watt generators.

Police fired at least 50 tear-gas shells at the rebellious prisoners.

They held 35 leaders of the prisoners including Jasim, Selim, Akhter, Kaurul and Nishan.

The Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka, IG (Prison), DIG (Prison) and other high-level officials were inside the jail till midnight. The situation was under complete control after the operation, sources said.

This was the fourth revolt in Dhaka Jail. Prisoners first revolted in December 29 when four prisoners were killed in police firing. Rebellion in Chittagong, Jessore, Comilla, Feni and Narshingdi followed the Dhaka revolt and death toll rose to 16. Of them, eight were killed in Comilla jail, three in Chittagong and one in Jessore.

Amid widespread demand the government granted special remission and general amnesty under which about 5,000 prisoners have been released so far from 76 jails of the country.

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Violent polls in India feared

NEW DELHI, Apr 8: Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan has said the fears that next month's general election will be India's most violent, reports AFP.

There certainly is going to be more violence this time and the elections will not be free and fair too this is my apprehension," Seshan told a news conference in the northern Indian city of Chandigarh on Sunday.

Seshan's unusually candid remarks came in response to a reporters question whether he expected the polls to be peaceful in Haryana, a northern state where election violence has been common.

"I am not only apprehensive about Haryana but all the

states as well as the union territories in the country," he Statesman and other newspapers today quoted him as saying.

Seshan was visiting Chandigarh, joint capital of Punjab and Haryana, for discussions on election arrangements in the two states.

He refused substantive comment when asked whether the army would be deployed to ensure a peaceful poll, calling at a sensitive question.

The autonomous Election Commission would endeavour to ensure a fair ballot, which Seshan said would be spread over three days to enable security forces travel from one potential trouble spot to another.

His comments corroborated fears expressed by politicians and the press that the elections would be marred by large-scale violence surpassing the bloodshed during the November 1989 polls when more than 100 people were killed.

Fears this time have arisen mainly because of an aggressive Hindu campaign to replace a disputed 16th-Century Muslim shrine in the northern Indian city of Ayodhya with a temple to the Hindu God Rama.

Expectations of violence have also been based on the centrist National Front's championing of job quotas for the backward castes, which has aroused the anger of upper-caste Hindus.

Dhaka-Beijing ties will grow: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Monday hoped that the close and friendly relationship between Bangladesh and China, the foundation of which was laid down by late President Ziaur Rahman, would grow in all dimensions for mutual benefit of the two nations, reports BSS.

She said her government would work for broadening and cementing the traditional ties between the two countries in all aspects including the fields of economic, trade, cultural, education and technical.

Begum Zia said this while talking to Mr. Wang Wen Dong, Chinese Vice Minister for

Economic Relations and Trade who called on her at the Prime Minister's office at the Jatiya Sangsad.

Mr. Wang is leading his country's 12 member delegation to the sixth session of Bangladesh-China joint economic commission which began in Dhaka Monday morning.

The Chinese Vice Minister conveyed the greetings of Premier Li Peng to Begum Khaleda Zia.

He expressed his happiness that Bangladesh attached importance to the broadening of friendly ties with China.

Mr. Wang recalled the role

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Bank officials directed to realise loans

Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman on Monday directed the bank officials to make all-out efforts to recover the unrealised loans of different nationalised commercial banks and other development financial institutions from the defaulting borrowers for the greater interest of the nation, reports BSS.

The Finance and Planning Minister was addressing a high level meeting of the heads of different nationalised commercial banks, development financial institutions and non banking financial institutions held at the NEC auditorium of

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Major issues need early solution, Shahabuddin tells Bijrani

The Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Monday referred some outstanding problems between Pakistan and Bangladesh and called for their immediate solution during his discussion with Mir Hazar Khan Bijrani, the visiting Pakistani Railway Minister at President's Secretariat, reports BSS.

During the meeting, the Minister, who is also the special envoy of Pak Prime Minister handed over a letter of Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaque Khan to the Acting President.

In his letter, the Pakistan President congratulated Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed for his role towards successful completion of a free and fair parliamentary election in Bangladesh for transition to democracy, an official said.

The Acting President asked the envoy to convey his greetings to President Ghulam Ishaque Khan

Three bills introduced

By Staff Correspondent

Three bills were introduced in the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) Monday.

Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz introduced the Supreme Court Judges (Remuneration and Privileges) (Amendment) Bill to validate an ordinance allowing ten per cent dearness allowance to Supreme Court Judges.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury raised a question whether the Treasury Bench which represented a political party was prepared to take responsibility for the actions of the Acting President who headed a neutral government.

The second bill—the Hindu Religious Welfare Trust

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'Constitution must be amended to legalise interim govt's activities'

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Party Acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury on Monday demanded immediate amendment to the Constitution with a view to legalising the appointment of the Acting President and all the government activities since December 6 last.

The amendment is a must for maintaining continuity of the constitutional process, Chowdhury said while addressing an 'Iftar' party hosted by the 'Ershad Mukti Parishad' at

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Governor of Karachi Jail shot dead

KARACHI, Apr 8: The Governor of the Karachi Jail where Benazir Bhutto's husband is being held was shot dead today by unidentified gunmen, Pakistan police said, reports Reuters.

Abdur Rahman Sheikh was in charge of Landhi Prison where the Opposition leader's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, is being held on more than a dozen charges, including murder conspiracy.

One police constable was also killed and another wounded in the shooting on a busy street in Pakistan's biggest city, police said.

Iraqi copters attack Kurds' escape routes

DAMASCUS, Apr 8: Iraqi rebels said helicopter gunships attacked all refugee escape routes to the Turkish and Iranian border today, killing or wounding thousands of terrified people, reports Reuters.

"Helicopters of the Iraqi regime are shelling northern roads that are packed with tens of thousands of refugees fleeing towards the Iranian and Turkish borders," said a spokesman for the Shi'ite opposition group of Ayatollah Mohammed Taqi Al-Mudarrisi.

A spokesman for the

Damascus-based Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) said, "A new massacre was carried out today by Saddam Hussein's forces."

"Iraqi helicopter gunships and heavy artillery guns have been pounding since early morning all roads leading to the Turkish and Iranian borders. They are also shelling mountains and hills where displaced families are huddling."

"Thousands of civilians were killed or wounded in the mad and indiscriminate bombardment," the KDP

spokesman said. He said tens of thousands of civilians were trekking down muddy roads in freezing weather when the helicopters started hunting them down.

Those who had taken sanctuary in snow-swept mountains and in caves because they could not make the exhausting trip to the border were not spared the bombardment, the KDP spokesman added.

He said an estimated one million Kurds were stranded in the mountains near the Iraqi border and many women

died with their infants after giving birth on route.

Up to two million northern Kurds and southern Shi'ites are fleeing Iraq for Turkey and Iran since President Saddam Hussein's forces crushed a twin revolt last month.

The KDP spokesman said rebels were still resisting after Saddam's troops, backed by tanks, artillery and helicopter gunships, attacked their stronghold in mountains overlooking the northern town of Sulaimaniya. He said troops were also attacking rebels in the Salaheddine area of Irbil

province. KDP leader Massoud Barazani, who is still at the battlefield, urged the United Nations and European Community leaders meeting in Luxembourg today to quickly intervene and put an end to the extermination of the Kurds.

In a statement, Barazani called for an immediate meeting for the Security Council to discuss the Kurdish issue. The Council last Friday condemned Baghdad's actions.

Mudarrisi's spokesman said Saddam's forces were

besieging cities in the south and central Iraq whose people had joined the revolt.

He said the siege prompted more than one-and-a-half million people to flee the central cities of Najaf, Hillah, and Kut and Basra, Nassirya, Diwaniya and Samawa in the south to remote villages. There, they would wait for the appropriate opportunities to escape to neighbouring countries.

Iran said today it had reopened its borders to Iraqi refugees seeking shelter from the wrath of the Iraqi army.